

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as indicated hereafter. [Use ~~strikethrough~~ for deleted matter (or double square brackets "[[]]" if the strikethrough is not easily perceivable, *i.e.*, "4" or a punctuation mark) and underlined for added matter.]

1. (Currently Amended) A surgical ~~Surgical~~ ring (1), designed to be implanted in the body of a patient around (a) biological organ(s) forming a pouch or a duct, in order to modify the cross-sectional area of ~~a~~ the passage of the ~~said~~ organ when it is tightened by the ring, the ~~said~~ ring (1) comprising:

a flexible band (2), comprising first and second extremities (3, 4), the ~~said~~ flexible band (2) being designed to be closed near these two extremities (3, 4) by a closure system to form a closed ring, the ~~said~~ closed ring having an internal contact surface (2A) with the biological organ and an opposite external surface (2B)[[],]; and

wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the closure system comprises a means of encircling (5) united to the first extremity (3) and arranged to evolve between:

[[-]] a de-latching configuration where the means of encircling (5) forms an open collar freeing the second extremity (4)[[],]; and

[[-]] a latching configuration where the means of encircling (5) forms a closed collar designed to surround the second extremity (4) so as to unite it with the first extremity (3), the ~~said~~ closed collar presenting opposite front (6) ~~(8)~~ and rear faces ~~sides~~ (7), between which an encircling opening extends, which is designed to accept the second extremity (4).

2. (Currently Amended) The surgical ~~Surgical~~ ring (1) according to claim 1, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the means of encircling (5) is arranged so as to pass reversibly between the de-latching and the latching configurations.

3. (Currently Amended) The surgical ~~Surgical~~ ring (1) according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the means of encircling (5) further comprises a male element (8) and a female element (9), each of which is mounted integrally to the first extremity (3) and

mounted on or relative to the latter in such a way that, when they are connected together, the means of encircling (5) is latched, forming the closed collar.

4. (Currently Amended) The surgical ~~Surgical~~ ring (1) according to claim 3, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the female element (9) further comprises an orifice (9A) through its full thickness, between opposite first and second sides (9B, 9C), ~~whereas~~ the male element (8) further comprises a tab designed to be slid into orifice (9A), the said tab being provided with a means of blockage (8A, SB) which works in conjunction with orifice (9A).

5. (Currently Amended) The surgical ~~Surgical~~ ring (1) according to claim 4, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ tab (8) further comprises features a link extremity (10) attached to the external surface of the ring (1) and a free extremity (11), the female element (9) being likewise attached to the external surface of the ring with regard to the tab (8), in such a way as the closed collar extends towards the exterior of the ring (1).

6. (Currently Amended) The surgical ~~Surgical~~ ring (1) according to claim 4 ~~or~~ 5, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ tab (8) further comprises, ~~on the one hand~~, a first means of support (8A), which forms a first means of blocking and is designed to act as a support against peripheral edge (13) of orifice (9A) on the first side (9B) of female element (9), and, ~~on the other hand~~, a second means of support (8B) which forms the second means of blocking and is designed to act as a support against the peripheral edge of orifice (9A) on the second side (9C) of female element (9), the said second means of support being shaped to cooperate with orifice (9A) like a cam in a bearing, the said first and second means of support (8A, 8B) being arranged relative to each other so that, in latch configuration, they are tightened around the female element (9) so as to ensure a stable latching configuration.

7. (Currently Amended) The surgical ~~Surgical~~ ring (1) according to claim 6, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ tab (8) further comprises features, ~~on the one hand~~, a shoulder (8A), which defines a support surface forming a first means of support, and, ~~on the other hand~~, a flexible extension (8B) forming a second means of support, the free extremity (11) of tab (8) being

shaped so as to act as the first prehension support, the said first prehension support allowing tab (8) and flexible extension (8B) to pass through orifice (9A), so as to form the closed collar.

8. (Currently Amended) The surgical ~~Surgical~~ ring (1) according to claim 4 ~~one of claims 4 to 7~~, wherein characterized in that tab (8) further comprises ~~has~~ a chamfered profile to facilitate its introduction and passage into orifice (9A).

9. (Currently Amended) The surgical ~~Surgical~~ ring (1) according to claim 7 ~~one of claims 5 to 8~~, wherein characterized in that ring (1) further comprises ~~features~~ a second prehension support (15) which extends near the extremity of link (10) of tab (8), the said second prehension support (15) permitting holding ring (1) during the process of separating the male (8) and female (9) elements, carried out so as to open the ring (1).

10. (Currently Amended) The surgical ~~Surgical~~ ring (1) according to claim 9 ~~one of claims 5 to 9~~, wherein characterized in that the female element (9) features a third prehension support (9) which permits separation of male and female elements, so as to open the ring (1).

11. (Currently Amended) The surgical ~~Surgical~~ ring (1) according to claim 1 ~~one of the preceding claims~~, wherein characterized in that the second extremity (4) of ring (1) further comprises ~~is provided with~~ a first means of stopping (16) designed to thrust against the rear face (7) of the closed collar surrounding the second extremity (4) of the ring in latching configuration, so as to prevent the shifting of the second extremity (4) in the opening direction of ring (1).

12. (Currently Amended) The surgical ~~Surgical~~ ring (1) according to claim 11 ~~one of the previous claims~~, wherein characterized in that the second extremity (4) of ring (1) further comprises ~~is provided with~~ a second means of stopping (17), designed to thrust against the front face (6) of the closed collar surrounding the second extremity (4) of ring (1) in latching configuration, so as to prevent shifting of the second extremity (4) in the closing direction of ring (1).

13. (Currently Amended) ~~The surgical~~ Surgical ring (1) according to claim 12 ~~claims 10 and 11, wherein characterized in that said~~ the first and second means of stopping (16, 17) are arranged relative to each other so as to tighten the closed collar (5) between them in the latching configuration, so as to substantially prevent any shifting of the second extremity (4) relative to the first extremity (3).

14. (Currently Amended) ~~The surgical~~ Surgical ring (1) according to claim 1 ~~one of the preceding claims, wherein characterized in that~~ flexible band (2) further comprises features a portion of reduced cross-sectional area (18) at the level of the second extremity (4) of ring (1), the said portion (18) being designed to be lodged laterally in a recess (19B), of a shape complementarily arranged at the level of the first extremity (3), the said recess (19) forming part of the closed collar in latching configuration, so as to ensure continuity of the internal surface (2A) of ring (1).

15. (Currently Amended) ~~The surgical~~ Surgical ring (1) according to ~~one of claims 11 to 13 and according to claim 14, wherein~~ characterized in that flexible band (2) further comprises features a shoulder (17) at the level of the transition of the portion of reduced cross-section (18), the said shoulder (17) acting as a second means of stopping.

16. (Currently Amended) ~~The ring~~ Ring (1) according to claim 15 ~~one of the preceding claims, wherein characterized in that~~ the flexible band (2) and the closure system (5) form a single piece made of the same material.

17. (Currently Amended) ~~The ring~~ Ring (1) according to claim 11 ~~one of the preceding claims, further comprising characterized in that it comprises~~ a system (19, 23, 26, 27, 28) to reversibly control the variation of an its internal perimeter, the said system (19, 23, 26, 27, 28) comprising a flexible filiform element (19) inserted longitudinally and by sliding into the material(24) forming the body of ring (1), substantially between the first and second extremities (3, 4) so as to define a fixed portion (19A) united to the first extremity (3) and a free portion (21) functionally associated with an actuator (23) mounted on ring (1), such that actuator (23) can

ensure reversible translation of flexible filiform element (19) so as to obtain an associated variation of the diameter of ring (1).

18. (Currently Amended) The ring ~~Ring~~ (1) according to claim 17, wherein ~~when it depends on claim 11, characterized in that~~ actuator (23) is arranged on ring (1) to constitute the first means of stopping (16) ~~or to be associated with it.~~

19. (Currently Amended) The ring ~~Ring~~ (1), according to claim 1, wherein the ring ~~one of the preceding claims, characterized in that~~ it is formed of a gastric ring designed to be implanted around the stomach or esophagus.

20. (Currently Amended) The ring ~~Ring~~ (1) according to claim 1, wherein the ~~one of~~ claims 1 to 18, characterized in that it consists of a ring ~~is~~ is designed to be implanted around one of the group consisting of: a ~~the~~ bladder, a ~~or~~ urinary tract, a ~~or around the~~ gastro-intestinal tract[[s]], and a ~~or around~~ blood vessel[[s]].